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REVIEW ESSAY

RELIGION AND POLITICS 2004-2007

Reviewed by Leslie Griffin[*]

EVANGELICALS IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE: FOUR FORMATIVE VOICES ON POLITICAL THOUGHT AND ACTION. By J. Budziszewski. BakerAcademic 2006. Pp. 224. Paper. $13.59. ISBN: 0-801-03156-7.

THE MORAL VETO: FRAMING CONTRACEPTION, ABORTION, AND CULTURAL PLURALISM IN THE UNITED STATES. By Gene Burns. Cambridge University Press 2005. Pp. 352. $24.99. ISBN: 0-521-60984-4.

FAITH & FREEDOM: THE CHRISTIAN CHALLENGE FOR THE WORLD. By Jimmy Carter. Duckworth 2005. Pp. 224. £ 12.99. ISBN: 0 715-63610 3.

FAITH AND POLITICS: HOW THE "MORAL VALUES" DEBATE DIVIDES AMERICA AND HOW TO MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER. By Senator John Danforth. Viking 2006. Pp. 256. $16.47. ISBN: 0-670-03787-7.

IS DEMOCRACY POSSIBLE HERE?: PRINCIPLES FOR A NEW POLITICAL DEBATE. By Ronald Dworkin. Princeton University Press 2006. Pp. 192. $13.57. ISBN: 0-691-12653-4.

THE VALUES CAMPAIGN?: THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT AND THE 2004 ELECTIONS. Edited by John C. Green, Mark J. Rozell and Clyde Wilcox. Georgetown University Press 2006. Pp. 273. $44.95. ISBN: 1-589-01109-0. Pp. 304. Paper. $16.98. ISBN: 1-589-01108-2.

THE FAITHS OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS. By David L. Holmes. Oxford University Press 2006. Pp. 240. $13.60. ISBN: 0-195-30092-0.

AMERICAN GOSPEL: GOD, THE FOUNDING FATHERS, AND THE MAKING OF A NATION. By Jon Meacham. Random House 2006. Pp. 416. $15.57. ISBN: 1-400-06555-0.

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WITNESSING THEIR FAITH: RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE ON SUPREME COURT JUSTICES AND THEIR OPINIONS. By Jay Alan Sekulow. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2005. Pp. 369. $27.95. ISBN: 0-742-55064-8.
THE HOLY VOTE: THE POLITICS OF FAITH IN AMERICA. By Ray Suarez. Rayo 2006. $16.47. ISBN: 0-060-82997-4. Harper Paperbacks 2007. Pp. 320. Paper. $10.17. ISBN: 0-060-82998-2.
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF POLITICS AND RELIGION. (2 vols.) Edited by Robert Wuthnow. CQ Press, 2d ed. 2006. Pp. 530. $275.00. ISBN: 0-872-89323-5.

Is there a middle ground where religion and politics, church and state, Republicans and Democrats, red and blue, can meet? The theme of many of these books, which were written by politicians, journalists, historians, sociologists, political scientists and lawyers, is that it is time to seek a "common sense" approach to religion and politics. (Meacham, 239) The perceived problem is the increased polarization of political life due to "excessive religious influence and excessive secularization." (Meacham, 5) Faced with the extremes of the religious right and the secular left, the authors suggest a variety of middle ground solutions: the "sensible center" (Meacham, 5); the "court of reason and common sense" (Holmes, 78); the "political center" (Danforth, 127); "reconciliation" (Carter, 46 & Danforth, 1); a "clear, cohesive" view of politics (Budziszewski, 15); "limiting frames," not "moral worldviews" (Burns, 7); "principles . . . sufficiently deep and general so that they can supply common ground for Americans from both political cultures into which we now seem divided." (Dworkin, 11)

"[W]hat we're doing now isn't working," reports Ray Suarez of PBS' NewsHour. (Suarez, 261) The problem, according to former Missouri Senator John Danforth, is that politics has become much more partisan and divisive since his early years in the Senate. Danforth argues that too much religion in politics has contributed to that atmosphere; some politicians "are so confident that their position is God's position that they become dismissive and intolerant toward others and divisive forces in our national life." (Danforth, 10) Although Danforth, a Republican, insists that the problem is politicians' prevailing attitudes toward politics and "not that Christians are conservative or liberal," he reserves his harshest criticism for members of the Christian Right, complaining that "[i]n recent years the wisdom of our founding fathers has been challenged as the Republican Party has identified itself

with the political agenda of Christian conservatives." (Danforth, 4) That perspective is echoed by former President Jimmy Carter, a Democrat, who blames fundamentalists for the increasingly vituperative tone of American politics, which is "more politically divided than at any time in living memory." (Carter, 9) Carter is more emphatic than Danforth that "[n]arrowly defined theological beliefs have been adopted as the rigid agenda of a political party." (Carter, 3) Journalist Suarez shares the politicians' positive memories of an earlier era, writing, "I feel as if I'm no longer living in the country I was raised in. Something valuable in the accommodation we made for one another is gone, and getting it back will take something more than just groping our way forward." (Suarez, 2) These politicians' and journalist's complaint about division is validated by the political scientists' detailed analysis of the 2004 elections, which confirms the "heightened electoral polarization" in the country, (Green et al., 11) or, in law professor Ronald Dworkin's more stark conclusion, "American politics are in an appalling state." (Dworkin, 1)

The proposed solutions to the problem of polarization seek some middle or common ground, whether in history, religion, philosophy, sociology or law. One popular refrain is that Americans should return to the wisdom of the Founding Fathers for insights about overcoming the current division. Jon Meacham, the managing editor of Newsweek, and David Holmes, the Walter G. Mason Professor of Religious Studies at the College of William and Mary, offer different accounts of the Founding Fathers' wisdom for today. Meacham describes his book as "a narrative essay that covers much ground quickly and briefly," (Meacham, 16) and it does, ranging from chapters about the Founders to the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, Charles Darwin, World Wars I and II, the Civil Rights Movement, and modern presidents. The point of Meacham's quick history is to support his thesis "that the sensible center holds." (Meacham, 5) The sensible center recognizes religion's importance to the nation, believes that the benefits of faith outweigh its costs, sees religion as a possible source of unity rather than division for the nation, and finds expression in the Supreme Court opinions of Justices William O. Douglas and Sandra Day O'Connor. Meacham encapsulates the wisdom of the Founding Fathers in the following sentence:

> The sound and fury of our own time could be calmed by grasping what [the Founders] had to say about the role of faith in the nation. Respect religion, hear it out, learn from it, then let the work of the country unfold as the parties to the republican contract—the

Constitution—will have it. (Meacham, 245)

While Meacham's book uses history to support his thesis, Holmes employs historical resources to paint a compelling portrait of a different era in which the Founders practiced a faith different from our own. A fascinating opening chapter provides a tour of religion in the colonies in 1770. Later chapters describe the religious views of Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe and their wives and daughters. Although Holmes is modest in explaining that "[a]n examination of history cannot capture the inner faith of any man," (Holmes 140) he demonstrates how historians can nonetheless glean much understanding of the Founders' religions from the influence of the churches in which they were raised, as well as from analyzing how those views were challenged by their education and life experience. Holmes explains that we possess some historical tools by which to judge the religiosity of the Founders, including whether they baptized their children, whether they were confirmed, how often they attended Communion, and their use of (or failure to use) religious language. Although there have been repeated efforts over the centuries to turn the Founders into Orthodox Christians, Holmes demonstrates that many of them were Deists. (Chapter Twelve provides a layperson's guide to distinguishing the Deist from the Orthodox.) Their Deism should not surprise us, because "Deism was a prevailing sentiment" of their era. (Holmes, 164) The historian's subtle and nuanced book urges readers to understand the Founders in their own time and not to "revise history to align the founders' beliefs with their own." (Holmes, 164) Holmes also provides an interesting summary of what the Founders believed in common:

> Most believed in a guiding Providence and in a life after death. These affirmations separated them from the radical Deists of their time. They respected the ethical teachings of Jesus. Many believed that simple virtue and morality were of greater importance than adherence to a particular set of religious doctrines. Above all, they valued freedom of conscience and despised religious tyranny. (163)

Jay Sekulow, Chief Counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice, continues the historical quest in a different setting. He worries that the original intent of the Founding Fathers has been ignored by modern Supreme Court decisions about church and state. Sekulow has litigated numerous First Amendment cases in the Supreme Court with the goal of pushing the Court back from the extreme of secularization in which even the "under God" language of the Pledge of Allegiance was

questioned. His book examines, not the Founding Fathers, but Supreme Court justices, specifically explaining how their personal religion influenced important Court decisions about church and state. The study ranges from Joseph Story, *Vidal v. Girard* (religious teachers in school); to Samuel Miller, *Watson v. Jones* (slavery and church property); Morrison Waite, *Reynolds v. United States* (Mormon polygamy); David Josiah Brewer, *Holy Trinity v. United States* (church hiring); George Sutherland and Charles Evans Hughes, *United States v. Macintosh* (conscientious objection to war); Hugo Black, *Everson* (aid to private schools); Tom Clark, *Zorach v. Clauson* (school prayer and Bible Reading); and Warren Burger, *Lemon* (aid to religious institutions). From these case studies, Sekulow draws the interesting conclusion that "the opinion of the justices coincided with the official positions held by the religious denomination that had influenced them." (Sekulow, xiii) His book reinforces the historical emphasis of the Meacham and Holmes books by demonstrating how important history has been to the Court's interpretation of the First Amendment; "[w]hat becomes self-evident is that the Court's reliance on history will serve as the overarching test to determine the constitutionality of a public religious acknowledgment or practice." (Sekulow, 328)

Although Sekulow is primarily descriptive of the justices' faith and the context of the cases, his concluding chapter suggests a normative question: are justices who follow the teachings of their faith better interpreters of the First Amendment than justices who have no faith at all? In other words, can religious faith itself offer the solution to the problem of polarization? Both Senator Danforth and President Carter suggest that religion can play some positive role in overcoming polarization. They both heed lessons from St. Paul about the need to avoid dissension among believers. (Saint Paul's *Letter to the Romans* also provides the Prologue to Suarez's book.) According to Danforth,

> Christianity does not give us an agenda for American politics. It does not provide policy positions that we can identify with certainty as being Christian. What it does offer is an approach, a way of thinking about and engaging in politics, that while not issue specific, is highly relevant to our ability to live together as one nation, despite our strongly held differences. (210)

That approach can be found in the *Letter to the Romans*, which teaches Christians that they should keep politics in its proper place, that no one corners the market on truth, and that they should recognize their own limitations. *Romans* also emphasizes that Christians should "love one another with mutual affection" and "outdo one another in showing

honor," that they should engage the enemy, and that reconciliation begins with them. (Danforth 222) President Carter draws a similar conclusion:

> There are notable precedents for Christians to absorb strong differences and still work together to further God's kingdom. The early church survived when the fundamentals of faith offered adequate bonds to overcome dissension and unite the fallible and argumentative Christians. Perhaps, once again, we might be reconciled through emulating the actions and teachings of Christ and following the entreaty of Saint Paul to the early churches [not to have divisions]. (Carter, 46)

As the politicians search for guidance from St. Paul about how to behave in politics, Professor Budziszewski's book about evangelical politics offers a cautionary note about Bible-based politics. Budziszewski, who is professor of philosophy and government at the University of Texas at Austin, observes the Bible's inadequacy as a work of political theory; "[a]lthough important general principles about government can indeed be drawn from Scripture, the list of such principles is short." (Budziszewski, 23) Among these ten principles are that God is sovereign, God disciplines nations and rulers, and government demands obedience unless governmental edicts contradict the commands of God. (Budziszewski, 23-24) Budziszewski also includes as principles that God authorizes humans to use force to take life "in grave cases" (although never deliberately to take innocent life), and "[n]o matter how much respect is due to the state, the church is never to be identified with it." (Budziszewski, 25-26)

Budziszewski has edited a collection of essays that identify and analyze the theologies of four prominent theologians, namely Carl F.H. Henry, Abraham Kuyper, Francis Schaeffer, and John Howard Yoder. Despite the accomplishments of these figures and the increasing role of evangelicals in politics, the professor argues that evangelical political thought is incomplete. "Unfortunately, although evangelicals have long played a part in the public square, they have never developed a clear, cohesive, and Christian view of what politics is all about." (Budziszewski, 15) He notes "[w]e are not provided with an adequate orienting doctrine, an adequate practical doctrine, or an adequate cultural apologetic." (Budziszewski, 27) Given the lacunae in Biblical political theory (which is based on special revelation), Budziszewski identifies general revelation as the "missing piece of the puzzle" (Budziszewski, 30) for evangelical politics, and asks evangelicals to consider a natural law approach to politics. Budziszewski does not

provide the details about his natural law-based politics in this text, but a more developed natural law account of politics could provide an alternative common ground where the Bible does not.

Because of his argument that religion provides the approach to but not the substance of politics, Danforth seeks common substantive political ground. The abortion cases, for example (in which he participated as Attorney General of Missouri),[1] are properly viewed as concerning the role of the courts in a democracy and not religious values. The senator recommends that people of all religious backgrounds find common cause in their support for peacemaking, giving aid to suffering people, and opposition to the politics of personal destruction.

Although in earlier writings Carter, like Danforth, has emphasized the common ground of politics, in this book he "deliberately mix[es] religion and politics," "analyze[s] moral values from a religious point of view, and then include[s] [his] assessment of the adverse impact of recent political decisions on these same values." (Carter, 6) Thus, this book, in contrast to Danforth's, represents an option that has become popular among some Democrats in response to the repeated successes of Republican candidates with religious voters: to show that religious faith supports middle ground (or Democratic) policies and not the extremes of the fundamentalists.

After reading these religious writers, an important question remains unanswered: should Christians support peacemaking, give aid to suffering people, and oppose the politics of personal destruction because these things accord with Biblical norms, Christian principles, or the natural law, because all religions support them, or because they offer political common ground among all citizens?

Holy Vote offers a valuable rejoinder to Danforth, Carter and other religious politicians: "competence in government is more necessary than piety" (Suarez, 263) or, in other words, "being a man or woman of prayer may give you no insight at all into organizing a cabinet." (Suarez, 262) As a possible model for religion and politics, Suarez points to a state well-known to the Founding Fathers, Virginia, where Catholic Democratic gubernatorial candidate Tim Kaine was criticized by his Republican opponent Jerry Kilgore for not supporting the death penalty. In response, Kaine explained why, based on his Catholic faith, he was morally opposed to the death penalty, and yet would uphold it as the law. (Suarez, 282-283) Kaine's campaign discovered that voters "just

1. *See Planned Parenthood of C. Mo. v. Danforth*, 428 U.S. 52 (1976).

like to hear more of what motivates you, rather than 'Here's my position on issue X, Y, or Z.'" (Suarez, 282) According to Suarez, Kaine's approach of "'shar[ing] with people who I am'" successfully helps voters to assess candidates' character and commitments, without encouraging politicians to proselytize or to establish religion-based policies. (Suarez, 284-285) Kaine's example could be followed by other politicians as a common sense approach to balancing religion and politics. (Kaine won the election.)

Suarez spoke to hundreds of people as background for his book, and his details and facts, anecdotes and interviews illustrate the partisanship and division of current politics. Yet in the midst of this description, Suarez remains an optimist about the persistence of the middle ground, asserting:

> Both sides submit for your judgment an America that simply does not exist. One side suggests there is the oppressive establishment of a confessional state, where people who take seriously the First Amendment's free-exercise clause are a hounded and dwindling population. The other sees a dark and scary world where American entertainers, journalists, professors, and liberal politicians are enforcing an anti-Christian worldview. (Suarez, 7)

Suarez's optimism amid polarization is shared by Professor Ronald Dworkin, the Frank Henry Sommer Professor of Law at New York University and Quain Professor of Jurisprudence at University College London, who, while deploring the "appalling" state of American politics, proposes an approach to politics that all citizens can share.

Dworkin offers a philosophical alternative to the other authors' historical, political and religious solutions, seeking to resolve our political controversies by appeal to deeper principles. He first identifies two abstract principles that "not []every American would immediately accept . . ., but that enough Americans on both sides of the supposedly unbridgeable divide would accept . . . if they took sufficient care to understand them." (Dworkin, 7) He then asks Americans to engage with him in a debate over the application of those principles to specific topics like terrorism, human rights, taxes and religion. The two abstract principles thus should provide the appropriate ground for political argument about specific policies.

The first "principle of intrinsic value holds that each human life has a special kind of objective value." (Dworkin, 9) The second

> principle of personal responsibility holds that each person has a special responsibility of realizing the success of his own life, a responsibility that includes exercising his judgment about what

> kind of life would be successful for him. (Dworkin, 10)

In Dworkin's assessment, these principles are equivalent to the traditional principles of equality and liberty. Dworkin rejects the idea that we must choose one or the other; "political communities must find an understanding of each of these virtues that shows them as compatible, indeed that shows each as an aspect of the other." (Dworkin, 11)

Dworkin applies these two principles to a number of controversial constitutional issues, including terrorism, human rights and taxes. On the subject of religion, he begins by identifying two types of church-state interaction, contrasting the model of the tolerant religious state with the tolerant secular state. (Dworkin, 56) In the former, general monotheism is permitted; the state cannot prefer one religion over another but can prefer religion over irreligion. (Dworkin, 58) The latter state is neutral between religion and irreligion. (Dworkin, 58) Dworkin believes that his principles favor the tolerant secular state because it fosters the principle of personal responsibility in ways that the religious state cannot. (Dworkin 61) On more specific questions about religion, Dworkin's hope is that there is common ground between red and blue in the application of his principles. His conclusions suggest some agreement with, for example, Jay Sekulow, in allowing the "under God" language of the pledge and public religious displays. According to Dworkin, although the "under God" language "is a violation of liberty, it is not a practically serious one" and public religious displays should also be permitted because "there is precious little endorsement of religion in these public displays." (Dworkin, 85-86)

The agreement on the pledge, however, raises a question for Dworkin, namely, whether it is really best to start the discussion by enunciating common principles or, instead, by finding narrow topics on which partisans can agree. Suarez, for example, recommends that "[i]f we returned our policy debates to disagreements on the cases, rather than on the religious identities that bring us to our conclusions, we will always have a place to begin the conversation." (Suarez, 299) How do Dworkin's principles handle other hotly contested issues, such as, for example, gay marriage?

On that subject, Dworkin writes that the stakes are "very much higher" (Dworkin, 87) and that opponents of gay marriage violate the second principle of personal responsibility:

> The [anti-gay marriage] argument supposes that the culture that shapes our values is the property only of some of us—those who happen to enjoy political power for the moment—to sculpt and protect in the shape we admire. That is a deep mistake; in a

> genuinely free society, the world of ideas and values belongs to no one and to everyone. Who will argue—not just declare—that I am wrong? (Dworkin, 89)

Gene Burns might argue, not that Dworkin is wrong, but that his approach of fundamental principles is likely to fail in changing the law of marriage. Burns, a sociologist and professor of public affairs at James Madison College of Michigan State University, offers a fascinating study of the development of contraception and abortion law, explaining what moral arguments are likely to succeed and fail in American politics. Burns contrasts "frames" with "moral vetoes." (Burns, 7) Framing identifies what an issue is *about*. Is abortion, for example, *about* fetal life, or a woman's choice, or humanitarian medical care? (Burns, 7) Burns identifies two types of frames, which he labels "moral worldviews" and "limiting frames." (Burns, 7) Moral worldviews, as the name suggests, are broad perspectives that "encompass many morally charged issues simultaneously." (Burns, 16) Limiting frames are much more narrow or focused, allowing individuals to agree on the specific topic while disagreeing on broad moral questions. Socialism and feminism, for example, are broad moral worldviews that have supported access to contraception as part of an ambitious campaign of social change; groups that focus on access to contraception only have a more limiting frame. Burns's thesis is that limiting frames are more successful than moral worldviews in implementing change:

> What type of frames, then, allow societies to address moral disputes without fighting their moral battles to the death? In short, the answer is that the rhetoric of debate must isolate issues so that larger social and moral implications of concern to participants in the polity at large are minimally specified (whether those implications are real or imagined). Essentially, then, the more reduced and simplified discussion of an issue is—so that it is stripped even of the many specific moral implications that most people would, in other circumstances, attach to the issue—the more likely that groups with differing opinions can live with each other. (Burns, 13)

A limiting frame is narrow enough that citizens can support it without committing to a broad moral perspective or changing their whole moral worldview; "limiting frames are essential in the institutionalization of pluralism, precisely because they can allow people to avoid commitments to entire worldviews." (Burns, 284)

Although groups advocating moral worldviews usually fail at enacting broad new laws, Burns demonstrates that they can be effective by exercising a *moral veto* on legislation. Thus, a committed minority can have a tremendous influence on politics by being vocal enough to scare legislators away from an issue. Although the Roman Catholic Church never attracted broad support for its opposition to contraception, for example, it was able to exercise a moral veto; "[i]t could prevent legislative initiatives but could not rally support for a specifically Catholic agenda." (Burns, 107) Burns uses the limiting frames and moral veto language to explain the successes and failures of the Christian Right, whose call for a culture war was too broad to attract a vast number of adherents and thus failed in its goals of, e.g., amending the Constitution to prohibit abortion. Broad moral causes succeed only when people "perceive the movement's goal to be redress of a specific moral wrong, rather than implying an entire moral worldview," as occurred when the Civil Rights Movement persuaded citizens that discrimination and segregation were serious moral wrongs that required redress. (Burns, 14)

What about gay marriage? Relying on his abstract principles, Dworkin favors gay marriage. Burns implies that reform based on moral principles as broad as Dworkin's, instead of on a limiting frame, will not work, unless they redress a perceived moral wrong. A moral veto, however, is likely to succeed when it is "compatible with prevailing cultural assumptions: It has to be about something that is familiar and important within the society as a whole—even if there is strong disagreement about how important it should be or exactly what it means." (Burns, 285) Can we explain the recent controversies over gay marriage within these theories?

Fortunately, we need not speculate about the effectiveness of campaigns against gay marriage, because Professors Green, Rozell and Wilcox's *The Values Campaign* has accumulated the data about gay marriage and the 2004 election in Chapter Three, "Saving Marriage by Banning Marriage: The Christian Right Finds a New Issue in 2004." This informative book analyzes the now-familiar claim that the 2004 election was decided by values-based voters. Three early chapters address the general values questions about the campaign, while the remaining chapters assess the votes from the key states of the 2004 election, namely Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, Minnesota, Florida, Colorado, Oklahoma, California and South Carolina. The data and analysis are informative and engaging.

Although the Green volume agrees with Burns that the Christian Right's agenda remained "unfulfilled" before 2004, (Green, 57) the issue of gay marriage "transformed" the Christian Right, leading to the creation of new coalitions and state organizations, political involvement by new members and the reinvigoration of existing groups and members. These authors also employ the "framing" language; they argue that after court decisions favoring gay marriage, the gay rights groups were unprepared to frame the question of gay marriage, and so it fell to the Christian Right to advocate the *protecting marriage* frame. (Green, 59-60) That strategy worked, at least in the short term, and "[i]n the absence of an alternate frame—for example, a focus on equality." (Green, 60) (Over the long term, the authors question whether Americans "may find the argument that the institution of marriage is endangered by allowing other Americans to marry . . . less compelling.") (Green, 60) The focus on marriage provided new members for the coalition, including Mormon and African American groups who previously did not join the Christian Right on other issues. And, although the reelection of George W. Bush cannot be attributed to the debate over gay marriage, the referendum on that subject did move votes toward Bush in Ohio.

Gay marriage: a violation of the principle of personal responsibility, a threat to marriage, a commitment to equality, an end to discrimination? Senator Danforth provides an interesting illustration of how one legislator changed his perspective on gay rights and therefore illuminates the possible effectiveness of moral frames, fundamental principles and religious belief as a basis for public policy. The senator relates that he was long unaware of the need to protect his gay constituents from discrimination, and originally opposed inclusion of sexual orientation in the civil rights laws that prohibit employment discrimination because he believed sexual orientation, unlike race or gender, was "merely a matter of personal preference that an individual could change at will." (Danforth, 101) Moreover, he was aware that his political base would be upset by his support for gay rights;

> support for the [employment discrimination] legislation would have caused a clamor in Missouri, not only from people who were contemptuous of gays, but also from businesspeople who did not want any more government regulations about whom they could hire. (Danforth, 102)

Meetings with gay constituents and criticism by his church began to change Danforth's mind, when both accused him of conduct that was hurtful and insensitive to gays. That criticism surprised him: "That

people took it that way was a learning experience for me. Political issues are not abstractions." (Danforth, 103) The discrimination frame was successful when it was presented by those who had suffered from it and when reinforced by members of the senator's church. As a result of that experience, Danforth reexamined the arguments of the Christian Right for constitutional amendments banning gay marriage, concluding that those policies had one purpose only: to humiliate or bash gays. (Danforth, 109)

As an alternative, Danforth then recommends principles to which both sides of the gay marriage controversy should agree: that discrimination based on sexual orientation should be unlawful; that governments give legal status to same-sex unions; that religious groups develop some blessing for same-sex marriage; that committed relationships be encouraged for gay and straight alike; and that traditional marriage be honored. (Danforth, 104-105) Carter offers a similar solution of "letting governments define and protect equal rights for citizens, including those of 'civil unions,' and letting church congregations define 'holy matrimony.'" (Danforth, 69) It is arguable that both politicians are more Burnsian than Dworkinian in their approach to principles.

For now, however, as Suarez reports, on gay marriage "the pros and the antis may just have fought their way to a draw, and a long stalemate," (Suarez, 109) and we await the next stages of the controversy. Suarez observes that the "tiebreakers" on this issue may be Blacks and Latinos, who may become unexpected allies of the Christian Right. (Suarez, 109-119) The political scientists anticipated the next stage of shifting coalitions among religious voters, as they reported after the 2004 election:

> Our most interesting finding may be the diversity within the Christian Right activist corps. . . . This internal diversity means that the Christian Right will not always speak with one voice. Although the movement was united behind George W. Bush in 2004 and is uniform in its backing for key social policy priorities, there is considerable disagreement on other matters. Given that many Christian Rightists are now enthusiastically committed to the political process, such differences may become more important in the future. A good test of their commitment may come in the 2006 mid-term elections . . . (Green, 51)

In the immediate aftermath of those 2006 elections, Green observed that there was a "revival" of the religious left for two reasons. First, Democratic politicians picked up some votes by appealing more

openly to their religious faith (in other words, what Suarez identified as the Kaine strategy succeeded). Second, two types of liberal voters became more active in politics: "People who use a very liberal theology politically, and others who are conservative or traditional in their religious beliefs but choose to emphasis progressive issues such as the economy or the environment."[2] (what we might call the Carter and Danforth strategies, respectively).

In 2006, some voters who voted for anti-gay marriage amendments nonetheless also voted for Democrats because of their position on other important issues like the war in Iraq, suggesting that limiting frames can predominate over broad moral worldviews, as Burns proposed, and that there is growing diversity in the evangelical community, as Budziszewski wrote. According to Green,

> [The 2006 election] shows that many people are willing to vote for traditional moral values, at least with regard to the definition of marriage, but at the same time turn around and vote for Democratic candidates. Voters sometimes contradict themselves. A Catholic in Milwaukee can, with good conscience, affirm traditional marriage but then vote for a Democratic congressman or governor because they are better on economic issues or on the war in Iraq.[3]

We eagerly await the publication of the next volume that explains in detail the 2006 election results.

Green also raised the possibility that in 2008, Republican values voters would face internal conflicts because of their losses in 2006. To help follow developments in religion and politics in 2008 and beyond, Robert Wuthnow, Andlinger Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for the Study of Religion at Princeton University, has provided the second edition of the *Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion.* In these two volumes, readers may pursue in more detail and context the subjects considered by the other authors and mentioned above. The selection on the *Christian Right*, for example, links the movement to American conservatism, and identifies the constituencies of the Christian Right. (Wuthnow, 134-136) This entry also explains the rise of the religious right in American politics before briefly mentioning the polarization of politics discussed above, concluding that "[a]lthough political parties are increasingly polarized, the American public is not." (141) In connection

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2. An Interview with John Green of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, Nov. 14, 2006, http://www.religionandsocialpolicy.org/interviews/interview.cfm?id=131&pageMode=general (accessed Mar. 3, 2007).

3. *Id.*

with the polarizing subject of gay marriage, the entry on *Homosexuality* mentions the court orders about gay marriage in the penultimate paragraph, preceded by a secular and religious history of homosexuality dating to the Biblical record. (386-388) The entry on the *Civil Rights Movement* emphasizes the role of religion in its development. (173-177) *Creationism and Evolution* (221-227), *Freedom of Religion* (not listed as the First Amendment) (308-315), the *United States of America* (904-909), *Separation of Church and State in Political Theory* (808-811), and *Liberalism* (552-559) address important topics in American religion and politics. Although there is no Founding Fathers entry, *Thomas Jefferson* (498-499) and *James Madison* (579-580) are introduced. Jimmy Carter can be found in the article on *Presidents, American*, which describes the American presidents' religious affiliations. (729) The *Fundamentalism* complained of by Carter is described at length; that entry provides not only a general definition of fundamentalism, but explains the specifics of Christian, Islamic and Jewish fundamentalism. (319-327)

The *Fundamentalism* entry is representative of the encyclopedia's goal of moving beyond an American and a Christian emphasis:

> The encyclopedia's aim is to present the historical roots of the relations between politics and religion in the modern world and to explain their global interconnections . . . In preparing this work, the editors and contributors sought to represent the vast diversity of ways in which religions and political systems are influencing each other throughout the contemporary world. (ix)

The book ranges from *Afghanistan* to *Zimbabwe*. (12, 961) Among the nearly three hundred entries are *Atheism* (45-50) and *Baha'i* (51-53) as well as *Baptists* (60-65) and *Anabaptists* (25-29); *Tibetan* and *Theravada Buddhism* merit separate entries (85-88, 79-85); Islam has seven separate entries; *African American Experience* (17-21) and *Traditional African Religions* (885-887) are both represented. And much more.

The appendices include important documents on religion and politics from *Luther's Ninety-Five Theses* (1517) (971-974) to the *Irish Peace Accords* (1998) (991-995), a table listing *Religious Affiliation in Countries and Religions of the World*, mid-2005 (996-1000), and a useful selection of provisions on religion and politics from *Constitutions of the World* (1001-1011).

Many political commentators are already complaining that the 2008 presidential campaign has started too early. But it is not too early to begin reading about religion and politics 2004-07. These books will at least tell you what to look for in that campaign and perhaps to predict

what will happen next. Already religious questions are being raised about the presidential candidates. Will Americans vote for a Mormon candidate, former Governor Mitt Romney of Massachusetts? Will Democratic Illinois Senator Barack Obama's attempts to include more references to Christian faith in his campaign succeed? The 2008 election will therefore test in practice the theory of these books, namely whether a middle ground, common sense solution to the nation's problems can emerge in a political arena filled with discussion of religious values.